Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) Report 1643 - February 6 2009

Amateur Radio Newsline report number 1643 with a release date of Friday, February 6th, 2009 to follow in 5-4-3-2-1.

The following is a QST. The International Telecommunications Union takes another look at BPL, amateurs in Sweden get 6 meters while hams in the United States and Australia gear up as mother nature takes her toll. Find out the details on Amateur Radio Newsline(tm) report number 1643 coming your way right now.

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THE BPL WAR: ITU AGAIN LOOKS AT BROADBAND OVER POWERLINE INTERNET ACCESS

The International Telecommunications Union is once again taking a close look at protecting radio communications from interference caused by Broadband over Powerline or BPL. Jeremy Boot, G4NJH, is in Nottingham, in the UK, with more:

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Working Party 1A of the ITU-R is preparing a report on Power Line Telecommunications, examining the protection levels required by various radio services.

The US and Japan, in particular, seem to want very little protection for radio services, although Japanese radio astronomers and US broadcasters have opposing views.

The section of the report dealing with the Amateur Service has been updated by the International Amateur Radio Union, and the next meeting is in Seoul, South Korea between February 24th and March 4th.

I'm Jeremy Boot, G4NJH, and you are listening to the Amateur Radio Newsline.

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The IARU will be represented at the Seoul meeting by one of their Technical Consultants. He is the Radio Society of Great Britain's Past President, Peter Chadwick, G3RZP. (GB2RS)

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RESTRUCTURING: HAMS IN SWEDEN GET 6 METERS

6 meters now available in Sweden. This, with word that Swedish Radio Amateurs have been granted access to the 50 to 52 MHz band with a power output of 200 Watts.

Previously access to 50 MHz in Sweden had been by special permit only. Although the power limit is currently lower on 6 meters than other bands the Swedish National Society website says that work is ongoing between the society and the nation's telecommunications regulators to get

this upgraded to a full kilowatt out at a later date.

And some other good news for hams in Sweden. Effective April 1st they will gain access to 7.1 to 7.2 MHz with 1 kW out. (Southgate)

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RESTRUCTURING: NEW ALLOCATIONS COMING TO NORWAY

Some new amateur radio allocations may soon be available in Norway. A report of the Norwegian amateur radio society the Norwegian Radio Relay League says that it was successful in persuading the nation's licensing authority to add new bands to the amateur radio band plan.

Included in the new offerings is a CW-only allocation of 490 to 510 kHz on a secondary basis with a maximum power of 100 Watts PEP. On the 160 meter band from 1.850 to 2.0 MHz, regulators indicate they intend to allow 10 Watts average power of instead of the current 10 Watts PEP.

The frequency segment from 5.260 to 5.410 MHz will be opened to all Norwegian radio amateurs on a secondary basis, with a maximum power of 100 Watts PEP.

The 12m band will be extended by 150 kHz and allocated from 24.740 to 24.990 MHz with a maximum power of 1000 watts.

Lastly, part of the European 70 MHz band will also be added to spectrum available to Norwegian hams. The Norwegian Radio Relay League says that the new amateur radio rules permitting access to these frequencies are expected to take effect sometime this spring. (DXNL)

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RESTRUCTURING: WIA TAKES OVER VK HAM TESTING

The Wireless Institute of Australia has taken over ham radio testing and the issuing of licenses from that nation's telecommunications regulatory agency. Rebecca Bruce has the details:

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On January 28th the Australian Communications and Media Authority, or ACMA, signed an agreement with the Wireless Institute of Australia. It sets out the conditions under which the national ham radio society will manage amateur examinations, issue of certificates of proficiency and provide callsign recommendations for the next 5 years. It also has an option for the possibility of extending the arrangement to a full 10 years if both parties agree.

The agreement came into force on Monday, February 2nd. Among other things, it dictates that the ACMA will continue to issue callsigns until close of business on Friday, February 27th. After that date the Wireless Institute of Australia will become responsible for the management of all levels of amateur callsigns. This includes special event, repeater and beacon callsigns, as well as those issued to individuals.

If it all works as planned, this compact between the Australian Communications and Media Authority and the Wireless Institute of Australia should streamline the handling of all matters in that nations amateur radio licensing system.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Rebecca Bruce, in Los Angeles.

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The Wireless Institute of Australia anticipates having a list of all callsigns available for selection on its website before March 2nd. This list will be accompanied by a news release setting out full details of the new callsign management and recommendation process. (WIA News)

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RADIO LAW: ONTARIO CANADA PULLS CELL LAWS ON HOLD

The Government of Ontario, Canada has tabled legislation intended to improve road safety by banning the use of some kinds of electronic devices by drivers. While the target of Bill 118 was intended to be cellular communication devices, the draft bill was written so broadly that many Amateurs were concerned that their operation could be banned by the bill's provisions.

In preparation for a new draft of the measure, Radio Amateurs of Canada representatives will soon meet with Ontario transportation officials to make the case for protecting mobile Amateur Radio operation. This will be done in conjunction with the Canadian Association for Rallysport and its Executive Director, Alastair Robertson, VE3RAA.

Meantime, Radio Amateurs of Canada President Dave Goodwin, VO1AU, has written to the Ontario Transportation Minister specifically requesting that Amateur Radio be excluded from the scope of the Bill. This letter reminded the minister that similar legislation in Newfoundland, Labrador, Nova Scotia and Quebec explicitly or implicitly protects mobile Amateur Radio operation. (RAC)

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RADIO LAW: HAWAII HAMS USE THE WWW TO ALERT ON PROPOSED MOBILE CELL BAN

Hams on Hawaii are using modern technology to speed the call to action. This, over a number of proposed measures to ban the use of hand-held cellular phones while driving in the island state.

As elsewhere, the concerns raised by the Hawaii ham radio community is that these proposed measures are overly broad and could be interpreted as also banning ham radio mobile operations. To help spread word of these measures to Hawaii's radio amateurs, Ron Hashiro, AH6RH, has put together a special web page. It provides information about legislation in progress affecting mobile two-way radio operations in the City and County of Honolulu and the State of Hawaii.

Those in need of the information that AH6RH is providing can find his website at

http://ronhashiro.htohananet.com/am-radio/cellular-phone-ordinance.html
 (KH6QX)

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RADIO LAW: ARRL ISSUES MOBILE AMATEUR RADIO POLICY STATEMENT

Meantime, the American Radio Relay League has issued a policy statement regarding the rights of hams to operate mobile in the face of mounting anti-cellphone and anti-texting while mobile state laws. Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, is in the East Coast bureau and has the details:

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It's something we've been hearing more and more about in the past several months.

Nearly a dozen state legislatures are considering such measures.

And, the idea of banning cell phone use or texting while driving is gaining lots of support from police agencies, insurance companies and even auto clubs.

To ensure, Amateur Radio's voice is heard on the issue, the ARRL board adopted a policy encouraging those backing these bans to exclude mobile amateur radio operations. The message is clearly aimed at state legislators and community leaders.

The ARRL's policy statement focuses on the concept that cell phones are full duplex devices - meaning the user is focusing on listening and conversing directly.

Amateur radio communications, on the other hand, the policy statement notes, require more listening and less transmitting and each cannot occur simultaneously.

The ARRL is worried that regulating cell phones and text messaging while driving casts such a broad net that amateurs who provide public service could be blocked from lending a hand to their communities in times of need.

The ARRL is hoping hams will take a look at the policy. You can read more at the league's website:
www.arrl.org.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Mark Abramowicz, NT3V, in Philadelphia.

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The ARRL Policy Statement does recognize the responsibility of the amateur community to conduct its activities in a manner that does not create unsafe operation of their motor vehicle. It says that safety has to be a top concern at all times. (ARRL)

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BREAK 1

From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline, heard on bulletin stations around the world including the WD8AYE repeater serving Canton, Ohio.

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RESCUE RADIO: VK HAMS PROVIDE EMCOMM FOR FIRES DOWN-UNDER

Ham radio is responding to wildfires down-under. Jim Linton, VK3PC, reports:

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The Red Cross communications arm RECOM, run by radio amateurs, provided vital support as bushfires raged in the Gippsland region of eastern Victoria.

Two RECOM units were activated on Thursday 29 January to provide communications at the Mirboo North and Churchill relief centers as hundreds of people were forced by the fires to leave their homes or unable to reach them.

The Gippsland fires destroyed 30 homes plus numerous sheds and vehicles.

Almost 700 evacuees or displaced persons were registered by the RECOM units with that information being transmitted by digitally-encrypted HF radio back to the Red Cross State Inquiry Center in Melbourne.

The National Registration and Inquiry System operated by the Red Cross provides the relatives and friends of the evacuees a single contact point for information on their whereabouts.

The hams involved were Bruce, VK3BMK; Graeme, VK3BXG; Peter, VK3AUO; Donald, VK3BPD; John, VK3BQS; Warren, VK3XSW; Graham, VK3GBJ; and John, VK3ATQ.

This latest deployment came during a once-in-a-century record three day heat-wave with temperatures topping 43 degrees Celsius. 109 on the Fahrenheit sale.

RECOM was established around 1999 and provides communications support for the Victorian Red Cross emergency service but can be deployed to anywhere in Australia.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Jim Linton, VK3PC

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It's currently mid-Summer in the Southern Hemisphere and the middle of Australia's wildfire season. Some 30 homes have so far been destroyed by the blaze. (VK3PC)

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RESCUE RADIO: HAMS ASSIST IN SEVERE WEATHER IN KENTUCKY

Meantime back in the United States, its ice and snow. That's what hams in Western Kentucky had to face as the phone lines sagged and cellphones stopped working. Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, is in the newsroom with more:

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According to the Lexington Herald Leader, ham radio operators volunteered to aid Red Cross shelters, emergency operations centers, and to just keep communications up and running. Some also drove the icy roads to connect family members with one another replacing cell phones and traditional land-line phones that went dead due to the foul weather.

In Henderson County, a ham radio operator reportedly spent four days at the local emergency operations center. He provided supplemental communication for police, fire and emergency medical personnel.

Elsewhere, sixteen members from the Kentucky Colonels Amateur Radio Club brought their equipment and relayed messages from the main shelter in Bowling Green. Club member Henry Cantrell, W4HTB, told the newspaper that others in the group fanned out to nearby cities including Brownsville, Smiths Grove and others.

Cantrell said that the amateur radio operators helped shelter occupants find and locate family members at other shelters as far west as Paducah. They also connected with state Homeland Security officials in Frankfort to relay the number and status of the various area shelters.   But W4HTB said that the main priority was directing cots, generators and other supplies to where they were needed the most.

In central Kentucky, the Bluegrass Amateur Radio Society was on alert. Society member Wilson Wells, N4ZQT, traveled to Versailles to help at a Red Cross shelter that had been set up in a seniors center.

For the Amateur Radio Newsline, I'm Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, in the newsroom in Los Angeles.

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The bottom line is that the hams of Kentucky were ready to roll when the weather took the phone lines down and knocked cellular service out.   (Lexingtom Herald On Line)

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HAM RADIO TESTING: NCVEC QPC SEEKS INPUT ON REVISED TECH EXAM

The Question Pool Committee of the National Conference of Volunteer Examiner Coordinators is now reviewing the Element 2 Technician Class question pool. This, as part of a regular process in which each question pool is reviewed on a four-year rotation.

The next Technician Class pool will become effective on July 1, 2010. In

preparation, the Question Pool Committee is seeking input from the amateur community concerning this revision. It is also accepting input in the form of new question topics, new questions and suggestions for changes or deletions.

If you have any comments or suggestions on the current Element 2 question pool, please contact the Question Pool Committee Chairman, Rol Anders, K3RA, via email to qpcinput (at) ncvec (dot) org; or on line at www.ncvec.org/feedback.php Guidelines for question formats are provided at that web address. The current Technician Examination Syllabus and Question Pool can be found elsewhere at the at www.ncvec.org website. (NCVEC)

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NAMES IN THE NEWS: GB50BH COMMEMORATES THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF BUDDY HOLLY

The 50th anniversary of the death of Rock and Roll legend Buddy Holly is being memorialized on the ham radio bands. This, with a commemorative operation by G4STH and G4YLO using the special commemorative call GB50BH.

The operation pays homage to the passing of Charles Hardin Holley. He was better known professionally as Buddy Holly and was an American singer-songwriter and a pioneer of rock and roll music.

Holly, along with fellow rock icons Ritchie Valens, and J.P. "The Big Bopper" Richardson were killed in the crash of a chartered plane jut after takeoff from Clear Lake, Iowa on February 2nd, 1959. In Rock and Roll music circles, that became known as "the day the music died."

Now, five decades later, GB50BH is on the air from on February 3rd from Sommerset, in the United Kingdom, and will remain in operation through March 3rd. QSL to G4STH either direct or via the bureau. (Southgate)

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HAM HAPPENINGS: HEIL SOUND TOP HOST NAB 2009 HAM RADIO RECEPTION IN LAS VEGAS

Bob Heil, K9EID, has asked that we pass along word that his company, Heil Sound Limited, will again be hosting the annual National Association of Broadcasters Amateur Radio Reception. Bob says that the gathering will take place at the Hilton Hotel and Conference Center after closing of the exhibit hall on Wednesday, April 22nd. More information will be posted on Bob's company website at www.heilsound.com in the near future. The National Association of Broadcasters Show and Conference takes place April 18th to the 23rd at the Las Vegas Convention Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. (K9EID)

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BREAKING NEWS: US DTV TRANSITION WILL BE DELAYED TO JUNE

I'm Bill Pasternak,WA6ITF, back with some late breaking news.

The transition from analog to all-digital telecasting in the United States will most likely be delayed some four months. In a heated debate by legislators Wednesday, February 4th, the House of Representatives voted to push the cut-off date for analog TV from February 17th to June 12th.

The vote was 264 to 158, with more Republicans voting for the delay than there were Democrats opposing the Democratic party leadership to vote against it. The vote was a victory for the new Obama administration, which pushed for the date change. The bill allows households with expired coupons to reapply for them. The measure now goes to President Obama who has promised to sign it.

As previously reported, ham radio operators were among groups targeted by the FCC to assist in making the public aware of the digital conversion and providing assistance to those who needed help. Hams nationwide have responded. Now they will have four more months to assist in the digital outreach campaign. (Published news reports)

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BREAK 2

This is ham radio news for today's radio amateur. From the United States of America, We are the Amateur Radio Newsline with links to the world from our only official website at www.arnewsline.org and being relayed by the volunteer services of the following radio amateur:

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HAM RADIO IN SPACE: BELLVILLE ISS CONTACT NOW ON YOUTUBE

Not very long ago we reported on an ARISS contact between the Ellis Elementary School in Belleville, Illinois, and Astronaut Sandra Magnus, KE5FYE, who was on board the International Space Station. Now, thanks to the KETC program Living St. Louis, you can get a chance to see this event for yourself on the World-Wide-Web.

The program segment is hosted by producer Ruth Ezell. She and her camera crew were there to watch and record as students in educator Jennifer May's third grade class had a chance to have their questions answered from on-orbit by KE5FYE, who happens to be a Belleville native.

With the technical support of members from the local amateur radio community, the session allowed the students to see how math and science have real-world applications. Now you can share the experience as well by taking your web browser to
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2TuJyNXx0c&eurl=http://livingstlouis.wordpress.com/2009/01/22/living-st-louis-video-ham-radio/&feature=player_embedded
(K7JA)

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RADIO IN SPACE: NASA'S LRO MADE READY FOR LAUNCH

NASA's Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter, or LRO, has successfully completed

thermal vacuum testing, which simulates the extreme hot, cold and airless conditions of space that the vehicle will experience after launch.

The orbiter was built at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. The now-completed thermal vacuum testing subjected it to the extreme temperature cycles of the lunar environment as engineers conducted simulated flight operations. Previously, the LRO had been put though spin and vibration tests. The orbiter was also subjected to acoustics testing where the bagged spacecraft was placed near wall-sized speakers that simulate the noise-induced vibrations of a launch.

The Lunar Reconnaissance Orbiter will now be shipped to NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida to be prepared for its April 24th scheduled launch aboard an Atlas V rocket. Accompanying the spacecraft will be the Lunar Crater Observation and Sensing Satellite. The latter will impact the moon's surface in a search for water-based ice. Both vehicles will radio their findings back to Earth. (NASA Goddard Release)

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RADIOSPORTS: ARRL APPROVES LIMITED USE OF CW SKIMMER

A big change in the world of contesting. Following months of review, the ARRL has decided to allow the use of the controversial CW Skimmer program, but only for multi-ops and single operators using assistance in ARRL contests.

The rules change on multi-channel decoders like CW Skimmer was approved by the ARRL Program and Services Committee, which met just before the mid-January 2009 meeting of the ARRL Board of Directors. In an interview with Radio-Sport dot net, ARRL Contest Advisory Committee Chairman Dick Green, WC1M, said that this emerging technology will be permitted in ARRL contests, but not in the Single Operator category.

This decision mirrors a similar one made last year by the CQ WW DX Contest. The ARRL decision means that all major contests have now dealt with the CW Skimmer issue. (W0WI via VHF Reflector)

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WORLDBEAT: KOREA UNVEILS ARDF COMMEMORATIVE STAMP

Turning to news from around the world, word that Korea has issued a postage stamp commemorating the 2008 Amateur Radio Direction Finding World Championships. The championship competition was held in that nation last September and hosted by the Korean Amateur Radio League. More than 450 participants from 28 countries came to Korea to compete. In issuing the new stamp a spokesman for the Korean postal service said that it is hoped that the World Direction Finding Championships held in his nation will provide momentum to stimulate more public interest and participation in amateur radio. (Korean Stamp Portal)

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DX OPPORTUNITY: MIDWAY ISLAND TO BE AVAILABLE TO HAMS IN OCTOBER

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is offering amateur radio operators a limited opportunity to operate from Midway Atoll. To avoid any conflicts with atoll wildlife, amateur radio operations will be permitted for two weeks only, from October 5th to the 19th of 2009.

Radio operation will be allowed only within a designated area on the north side of Sand Island and the use of portable generators will not be permitted. 120 volt mains power is available at the operation site.

Any modifications to the island power grid or infrastructure must be approved in advance by the Refuge Manager and be paid for entirely by the radio operators. All participants will be required to attend a Refuge orientation shortly after arrival, which is designed to enhance visitor safety, wildlife protection, and overall enjoyment while visiting the Refuge and Monument.

This event will mark the first opportunity for amateur radio operators to broadcast from the atoll since 2002. More information is available by sending an e-mail to Matt_D_Brown (at) fws (dot) gov.

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DX

In other DX news, word that 3B8FQ has his license in-hand and will be active from St. Brandon Island through Thursday, February 12th. His callsign is 3B7FQ and while this is primarily to maintain the meteorological station, he will be on to make contacts as time allows. Listen out for 3B7FQ on all bands from 80 through 10 meters on CW and SSB. QSL 3B7FQ and 3B8FQ via K5XK per instructions found on QRZ.com.

And M0VKY will be active portable EA8 from Lanzarote Island in the Canary Islands between March 31st and April 5th. His activity will be on 40, 20 and 15 meters using an FT-857D and some half wave dipoles. QSL M0VKY, direct or by the bureau.

OH2BAD has announced that he's spending his winter vacation on the warm Caribbean island of Aruba and plans to hit the airwaves as P40MH through February 17th. If you work him, QSLs also via bureau to his home call.

Also, F4DYW has been operating from Crozet Island, signing FT5WO. He was last heard on 14.222 MHz between 14:45 and 1640 U-T-C. Word is that he will be on Crozet until the end of November. QSL's go to F4DYW, direct or by the bureau, but don't expect a return card until after he gets back home.

Lastly, HA9RE, and a team of operators are now active from Wallis Island as FW5RE. They will be there through the end of February using CW, SSB and RTTY on 160 through 10 meters including 12, 17 and 30 meters. Their QSL manager is HA8IB.

(Above from various DX news sources)

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THAT FINAL ITEM: RCA BEGINS SCHOOL OUTREACH PROGRAM

And finally this week, word that the Radio Club of America has begun a new multi-faceted outreach program to reach youngsters and late teens to interest them in technology careers and in some cases also in amateur radio. Retired New York City educator Carole Perry, WB2MGP, is in charge of the program and tells us a bit what's being planned

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Perry: "A dear friend of mine who is a fellow RCA member named Richard Sommers, on the West coast is going to mostly in the inner-city schools of Los Angeles searching for at risk students who have some technical inclination but cannot afford after high school to pursue a trade or a vocation in anything technical as far as schooling goes.

"We are proposing giving these students -- once they are identified -- scholarship money which they will receive once they are enrolled or engaged in a technical or vocational trade school"

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As to recruiting new hams, that will first be explored in the North-East. There, WB2MGP will fall back on something she knows quite well. Teaching ham radio and putting ham gear in the classroom:

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Perry: "The other move is to encourage amateur radio in as many schools as I can get it into in my immediate area in the New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut area by going in and actually showing the track record of the successfully run ham radio programs that I already have lined up and in place. Also, by offering them equipment that is going to be donated by fellow RCA members."

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Perry says that this equipment will be checked out and put into first rate shape before its delivered to the schools to create ham radio stations where now there are none. The program will also train the classroom educators on how to use ham radio as a classroom teaching tool

You can hear more about this very interesting project being headed up by Carole Perry, WB2MGP, on this week's Rain Report. You can find it on-line at www.therainreport.com or by phone at area code 773-358-7845. The complete interview with Carole Perry is there right now.

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NEWSCAST CLOSE

With thanks to Alan Labs, AMSAT, the ARRL, the CGC Communicator, CQ Magazine, the FCC, the Ohio Penn DX Bulletin, Radio Netherlands, Rain, the RSGB, the Southgate News and Australia's W-I-A News, that's all from the

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official website located at www.arnewsline.org. You can also write to us or support us at Amateur Radio Newsline(tm), P.O. Box 660937, Arcadia, California 91066.

For now, with Bill Pasternak, WA6ITF, at the editor's desk, I'm David Black, KB4KCH, at the South East Bureau in Birmingham, alabama saying 73 and we thank you for listening.

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